



**Ministry Of Northern Development,
Mines and Forestry**

2011-2012

ODA Accessibility Plan

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Introduction

Each year, the Government of Ontario sets a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Every ministry participates through its annual accessibility plans, as required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is Ontario's roadmap to become barrier-free by 2025. It includes accessibility standards in:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- The Built Environment

This year the accessibility plans will help to inform planning requirements under the new Integrated Accessibility Standards (IAS) enacted last summer under the AODA. The IAS requires the Government of Ontario to develop a multi-year plan to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Our annual accessibility plan outlines the specific steps the government is taking to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Building on last year's plan, our 2011-12 Accessibility Plan will continue moving the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry toward the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

To view other ministries' Accessibility Plans, visit Ontario.ca.

Section One: Report on Measures to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in 2010-11

The Government of Ontario is working to achieve an accessible province by 2025.

In 2010-11, the government continued to comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ACS) regulation and continued to implement initiatives to enhance accessibility in other areas: employment, information and communication, transportation, the built environment and procurement.

This document includes a summary of the initiatives the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry implemented in 2010-11.

Customer Service

In 2010-11 our ministry...

- Remained in compliance with the Accessibility Standards Customer Service.
- Continued to ensure all new staff complete the necessary AODA training
- Continued to monitor feedback channels for accessibility-related issues or processes.
- Committed to enhancing the accessibility of ministry-organized and hosted meetings by providing staff with tip sheets and newsletter updates.
- Developed and implemented a service disruption protocol to fully meet the requirements of the ACS. The ministry's Emergency Management Section took a lead in developing a public service disruption notification that was responsive to the needs of ministry clients with a disability.
- Adopted and implemented the policies and practises embedded within the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Information and Communications

In 2010-11 our ministry...

- Ensured any internal ministry announcements and memos that were posted on the intranet were in accessible formats.
- Created a section dedicated to accessibility on our intranet in order to enable staff to easily locate guidelines on accessible documents and other resources.
- Encouraged staff to take e-learning videos about creating accessible PDF and word documents.
- Continued to encourage staff to consider accessibility while preparing communications materials to ensure that all products are accessible to everyone.
- Continued to comply with the guidelines and procedures for meeting public requests for accessible formatted publications.

Employment

In 2010-11 our ministry...

- Continued to alert the public that accommodations for persons with disabilities are available on request.
- Reviewed job ads to ensure there are no arbitrary barriers.
- Shared job ads with employment networks that assist persons with disabilities in their job search.

Built Environment

In 2010-11 our ministry...

- Ensured that our Thunder Bay office renovations and signage adhered to barrier-free regulations and policies of the Ontario Government.

Procurement

In 2010-11 our ministry...

- Took into account accessibility issues for each good or service when preparing the procurement documents and, where appropriate, necessary wording inserted into the procurement document so as to both specify the needs and allow evaluation of the good or services' capability to meet the desired accessibility requirements.

Section Two: Measures Planned for 2011-12 and Beyond

This year, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry Accessibility Plan focuses on three areas: Employment, Information and Communications and The Built Environment. These initiatives will support compliance with the existing Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

Customer Service

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive accessible goods and services from us. This means they will receive goods and services with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

For 2011-12 our ministry intends . . .

- To strengthen and enhance the established public feedback processes by continuing to add our toll free TTY number to our remaining government blue page listings across the province.

Information and Communications

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry is committed to making government information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. The information we provide and the ways we communicate are key to delivering our programs and services to the public.

For 2011-12 our ministry intends . . .

- To ensure that Internet and intranet websites and web content conforms with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than live captions and audio descriptions.
- To continue encouraging staff to consider accessibility while preparing communications materials to ensure that all products are accessible to everyone. This will be done through ministry broadcasts and information sessions.
- To continue to expand our intranet, in order to further enable staff to easily locate guidelines on accessible documents and other resources.

- To provide customers with publications and documents in alternate accessible formats when requested, as per established government processes and procedures.

Employment

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain talented employees with disabilities.

For 2011-12 our ministry intends. . .

- To continue to identify and eliminate barriers in employment policies, processes, practises or tools for people with disabilities.

Built Environment

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry is committed to greater accessibility in, out of and around the buildings we use.

For 2011-12 our ministry intends. . .

- To take accessibility into account with all new accommodation projects.

Other

For 2011-12 our ministry intends. . .

- To launch the Northern Mentorship Pilot Program: The Northern Mentorship Pilot Program is a joint partnership between the Northern Interministerial Council (NIC) and MNDM. The program's focus is to develop and implement a reciprocal mentoring approach with two streams: Diversity and Talent Development. The *Diversity Stream*, modelled after the OPS Diversity Mentorship Program, is designed to educate and heighten cultural awareness for mentors by engaging in open, honest and sometimes difficult conversations with mentees with varying backgrounds. Mentees will develop their career management skills and abilities. Open to all persons with disabilities working in the OPS located in Northern Ontario.
- To review PRAISE nominations taking into account diversity/accessibility workplace initiatives when determining the successful award recipients. PRAISE is a recognition program that celebrates the accomplishments and achievements

of its employees who contribute to improvements in service, operations and the work environment.

Section Three: Review of Acts, Regulations and Policies

In support of our commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry will continue to review government initiatives, including legislation and policies, to identify and remove barriers.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2010-11

- In April 2011, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry participated in training for multidisciplinary teams from all ministries on how to use the OPS Inclusion Lens to review laws for accessibility barriers.

Inclusion Lens

In 2011, the Ontario Public Service launched the Inclusion Lens. The Lens is an innovative tool to help address diversity and accessibility. With this tool, ministries can identify and address potential barriers to people with disabilities, and others that may be present in existing or proposed legislation, policies, programs, practices or services.

For 2011-12 our ministry intends. . .

- To continue to use the Inclusion Lens to review acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services.
- To encourage staff to include the Inclusion Lens e-course, available through the Centre for Leadership and Learning, in their learning plans.
- To encourage staff to use the Inclusion Lens when developing or reviewing policies, programs or services.

Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

ACS – Accessibility Customer Service Regulation

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

IAS – Integrated Accessibility Standards

OPS – Ontario Public Service

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act

MNDMF – Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry

MGS – Ministry of Government Services

PRAISE – People Recognition Award in Service Excellence

NIC – Northern Interministerial Council

TTY - Teletypewriter

For More Information

Questions or comments about the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry accessibility plan are always welcome.

Please phone: Pam Hull, MNDM AODA lead at 705-564-7444

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Visit the **Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario** web portal. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

Alternate formats of this document are available free upon request from:

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